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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS) Compensatory and developmental education is emphasized as the major moving force in the development of the disadvantaged. The development of disadvantaged people is necessary for the continued growth of their communities; programs should be developed which involve disadvantaged children at every stage of their growth and development. To that end, adult education programs to promote family planning, prenatal and postnatal care, and the provision of a better home environment are being adjusted to meet compensatory education needs. Gaps between parental desires and abilities to provide developmental experiences in the early years are being filled with new programs in early childhood education.

In elementary schools, age-grade decrements in school achievements which discourage disadvantaged children are being replaced with ungraded schools, junior primaries, fluid grouping, and strong reading readiness programs. After school hours, many schools are being kept open for tutoring, enrichment, and parent discussions. There is heavy emphasis on field trips, lowered class enrollment, the utilization of Peace Corps returnees and Peace Corps type volunteers, the utilization of new materials on intergroup education, and concentrated reading instruction.

In high schools, education for the vocationally oriented is being tied more closely to preparation for employment; colleges are informing impoverished but academically able youngsters about the increasing sources of support for college attendance and are working with them to develop their competencies for higher learning. In young adult and adult education, the emphasis is on remedying past deprivations.

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EDUCATING THE DISADVANTAGED: TRENDS AND PROSPECTS*

by

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Ladies and Gentlemen, it is indeed an honor and a pleasure to be with you on this occasion. The progression of events in education in our nation at this time serves to make this doubly so.

I am extremely gratified to speak at a time when the full resources of our country are rapidly being committed to a full-scale effort to "raise up" a fully educated and self-sufficient generation of our disadvantaged countrymen, and I am especially pleased to speak to the educators who have done so much of the pioneering work in this field. Our cities and towns and villages across the nation look to New York State and the great Eastern megalopolis of which it is the hub

*An address to the Special Projects Personnel Workshop, New York State Department of Education, Hotel DeWitt Clinton, Albany, New York, February 26, 1965.

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for the advancement and development of new ideas in all areas of national life. It is thus quite fitting that New York State should have taken the lead and shown the way in compensatory and developmental education, and we salute you in this Special Projects Personnel Workshop as bell-wethers of this very warm and wonderful movement.

If it is truly axiomatic that a fundamental change in educational procedures requires fifteen to eighteen years, our efforts to provide the programs for economically and socially deprived persons are about "on schedule." They have followed from the early research and concerns of the Allison Davises and Robert Havighursts of our time and from the growing concern of every teacher and administrator who became increasingly convinced that with the growing power and resources of our nation in the sciences and social sciences - "things" for the children of the poor did not have to forever "be that way." And if it is also axiomatic that rapid educational change is the result of the rapid progression of social and economic events, we are also in step with the times for the rapid decimation of the production worker, the dramatic increases in

the complexities of our economic system and the growing determination of Americans to extend basic rights, privileges and economic development to hitherto deprived minorities are now familiar themes to all.

Most important in this respect might be this vital concern for the poor and the belief that they did not "always have to be with us," the belief that if we were to use our knowledge and resources for any worthy purpose, we would use them to make an historic and unprecedented assault on this problem. It is altogether fitting that Americans should come to this point and their degree of emotional involvement in this effort should not surprise. Overcoming deprivation is what this country is all about. The flight from deprivation and the search for a new and better life brought the majority of our ancestors to these shores. Most of the comfortable people stayed in Europe or wherever. The perfection of the American dream in the minds of many, then, has come to mean the perfection of a system of education, which working hand in hand with our economic system, will extend the opportunities for full development to every individual in this country regardless of the economic and social circumstances into which

he was born. No other country has had the vast resources necessary to make such an effort and very few others have had the necessary will and determination to do so.

Compensatory and developmental education, in its broadest sense, has been recognized as the major moving force in the development of the disadvantaged. It is recognized as the sine-qua-non in the development of the "new" education and, thus, in the full extension of economic and social opportunities. Several quite basic principles are rapidly emerging as schools and communities become involved in the development of their programs. Educators and citizens are becoming convinced that such an education for the disadvantaged is a right and not a privilege. They are increasingly beginning to believe that the development of this segment of the population will be acutely necessary to the continued growth and development of their communities,and experience, together with the researches and demonstrations of behavioral scientists, is showing that comprehensive programs must be developed which involve children from, and true, even before,conception and touch their lives at every stage of

growth and development.

The powerful weapons of adult education to promote family planning, pre-natal and post-natal care and the provision of a richer home environment are beginning to be manuvered into position in compensatory efforts. School systems are combining with welfare and other community agencies and officials to push this very basic and welcomed program. One Midwestern city which initiated such a system of education and assistance under the poverty program last week reported that its field stations were inundated and its supply of booklets and materials decimated during the first few days. This exploded the myth that poor people were not too interested in the lot of their children which had gripped the imaginations of so many for so long in this community.

These programs promise to grow and spread. Educators are convinced that a well planned family, raised by parents who are au courant with the correct practices for developing a healthy, highly verbal, inquisitive, imaginative, trusting child who is ready to begin formal learning in the school, is the starting point. They are convinced that such will not

occur in depressed areas by accident and unlettered parents. Parents must be led and taught to do what they can and the compensatory program must take up the slack.

Educators are filling the gaps between parental wills and abilities to provide developmental experiences in the early years with the new exciting and heartwarming programs in early childhood education. Pre-school classes, as they are labled, have mushroomed faster than any educational innovation anywhere. Nearly 3,000 school systems have begun programs since September 64 - Feb. 65 according to U.S. Office of Education reports. Untold numbers of civic groups are operating their own programs. Following the researches of Bloom, Deutsch and others, we now know that cumulative deficits in language, cognitive and personality developments accrue in the first few years of life of deprived children which are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to overcome in later life. The age-grade decrements, educational alienation, drop-outs and much of the delinquency of these children have their roots in deprivation in early experiences. Educators are stepping in to fill these gaps and they are stepping in

fast. The quip, currently making the rounds, that: "education is a growth stock of which everyone wants a piece" fits the status of these rapidly proliferating programs. One of the heartwarming sights this summer will be the blooming forth of the vast $150 million Federal program: Operation Head Start which will bring enriched summer experiences to thousands of tots in depressed areas and untold pleasure in the expenditures of social energies to their mentors. An even broader expansion of programs of this nature is provided for in the Elementary and Secondary School Act now being considered in the Congress.

In the elementary years, educators are moving rapidly to scotch the age-grade decrements in school achievements which plaque disadvantaged children and eventually discourage serious attempts at academic achievement. Ungraded schools, junior primaries and fluid grouping are all being brought into play backed up by strong reading readiness programs which fuse with and continue the parental involvement of the preschool efforts. More and more schools are being kept open after five for tutoring, enrichment and parent discussions under the antipoverty program. These

efforts will expand under the Elementary and Secondary Act as will the heavy emphasis upon cultural enrichment through walking tours, bus trips and in-school efforts, the concentrated reading instruction, the lowered class enrollment, the utilization of Peace Corps returnees and Peace Corps type volunteers, the utilization of the new materials on inter-group education, in short, there will be an expansion of the entire spectrum of approaches to the development of the type of youngster who loves school and school work, who understands what is going on in them, who is moving along well in his or her development of academic competences and who wants more the same. These lower school programs seem limited in their variations only to the extent that fertile and concerned minds are set to the tasks of creating effective school and community experiences.

For the high school youngsters, educators are providing a rapidly expanding set of alternatives for his or her development. Education for the vocationally oriented is being tied more closely to preparation for employment and a sort of pluralism in methods of development is coming to the fore. Young people will attend more technical schools and participate

in more work-study programs as the provisions of the Vocational Education Act of 1963 take hold. Others will fit themselves for economic competence through the Training Centers and Job Corps of the antipoverty program and local programs of the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962. Youngsters will work their way through high school in many cases under work-stuiy provisions of the antipoverty program and many will attend college in the same manner. In all efforts, the habits of work, continuous study, flexibility in occupational choice and amenability to occupational change will be the byword.

The groves of academe are also stirring with change as colleges and schools come to grips with the problem of ferreting out, at an early age, the academically able youngsters of meager circumstances, making clear to them the rapidly increasing sources of support for college attendance and working with them to develop their competencies for higher learning.

Dartmouth, Oberlin, Duke, Vanderbilt, Harvard, The Independent Schools Association, The American Council on Education, The National Merit Scholarship Corporation, The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, The

Danforth, Carnegie, Rockefeller, Taconic foundations, and almost everyone who is anyone in higher education, are all sponsoring some sort of A.B.C. (A Better Chance) program in this area. The Federal government will plunge into the fray with its new Higher Education Act of 1965 now being considered by the Congress. Loans and grants to bright but needy students, urban university extension services for blighted areas and assistance to strengthen the small colleges with meager resources, in which so many disadvantaged college students seem to wind up, seem in the offing.

In young adult and adult education, educators are fighting a remedial battle with the devastations of past deprivations. This might be termed, in part, a "holding action" until the full force of the lower school action takes hold. But much is also developmental. To the extent of the incidence of parenthood among young adults and adults, the educational efforts here also give double impetus to the efforts with the younger children. The parent who improves his literacy level in the rapidly proliferating classes in basic education will help his or her children by being better able to read the materials in the child study efforts. The more intelligent he

becomes in general education classes, the more he will have to tell his children and thereby increase <u>their</u> intelligence. The more competent he becomes in manpower training classes, the more he is able to earn and so the now restricted number of children he has to raise as a result of the family planning program will have more of <u>everything</u> necessary for their development. "Snowballing reciprocity," if we are to coin a term!

In sum, when the educational efforts to aid the disadvantaged are coupled with the economic assistance programs such as increased small business loans, equal employment opportunities for minorities and others which are becoming more apparent today, the huge over-all efforts we are beginning to make in this country today has been likened to an intensive domestic Marshall Plan. Perhaps this effort is correctly termed and in a decade or so of effort the gaps between the comfortable American and "the other America" will have been narrowed to such an extent that many of the forced-draft measures will no longer be necessary. Until such time, educators will continue in the role of the architects of change and development. New York State, I am certain, will continue as the

vanguard of those who generate new ideas and approaches. Please accept my commendations for your fine effort in the past and this fine manifestation of your intentions to continue.